

medical history beginning with the month you say your disability began unless we have reason to believe that your disability began earlier.

(e) *Recontacting medical sources.* When the evidence we receive from your treating physician or psychologist or other medical source is inadequate for us to determine whether you are disabled, we will need additional information to reach a determination or a decision. To obtain the information, we will take the following actions.

(1) We will first recontact your treating physician or psychologist or other medical source to determine whether the additional information we need is readily available. We will seek additional evidence or clarification from your medical source when the report from your medical source contains a conflict or ambiguity that must be resolved, the report does not contain all the necessary information, or does not appear to be based on medically acceptable clinical and laboratory diagnostic techniques. We may do this by requesting copies of your medical source's records, a new report, or a more detailed report from your medical source, including your treating source, or by telephoning your medical source. In every instance where medical evidence is obtained over the telephone, the telephone report will be sent to the source for review, signature and return.

(2) We may not seek additional evidence or clarification from a medical source when we know from past experience that the source either cannot or will not provide the necessary findings.

(f) *Need for consultative examination.* If the information we need is not readily available from the records of your medical treatment source, or we are unable to seek clarification from your medical source, we will ask you to attend one or more consultative examinations at our expense. See §§ 416.917 through 416.919t for the rules governing the consultative examination process. Generally, we will not request a consultative examination until we have made every reasonable effort to obtain evidence from your own medical sources. However, in some instances, such as when a source is known to be unable to provide certain tests or procedures or

is known to be nonproductive or uncooperative, we may order a consultative examination while awaiting receipt of medical source evidence. We will not evaluate this evidence until we have made every reasonable effort to obtain evidence from your medical sources.

[56 FR 36963, Aug. 1, 1991]

§ 416.913 Medical evidence of your impairment.

(a) *Acceptable sources.* We need reports about your impairments from acceptable medical sources. Acceptable medical sources are—

- (1) Licensed physicians;
- (2) Licensed osteopaths;
- (3) Licensed or certified psychologists;
- (4) Licensed optometrists for the measurement of visual acuity and visual fields (see paragraph (f) of this section for the evidence needed for statutory blindness); and

(5) Persons authorized to send us a copy or summary of the medical records of a hospital, clinic, sanatorium, medical institution, or health care facility. Generally, the copy or summary should be certified as accurate by the custodian or by any authorized employee of the Social Security Administration, Veterans' Administration, or State agency. However, we will not return an uncertified copy or summary for certification unless there is some question about the document.

(6) A report of an interdisciplinary team that contains the evaluation and signature of an acceptable medical source is also considered acceptable medical evidence.

(b) *Medical reports.* Medical reports should include—

- (1) Medical history;
- (2) Clinical findings (such as the results of physical or mental status examinations);
- (3) Laboratory findings (such as blood pressure, X-rays);
- (4) Diagnosis (statement of disease or injury based on its signs and symptoms);
- (5) Treatment prescribed with response, and prognosis; and

(6) A statement about what you can still do despite your impairment(s) based on the medical source's findings on the factors under paragraphs (b)(1)

through (b)(5) of this section (except in statutory blindness claims). Although we will request a medical source statement about what you can still do despite your impairment(s), the lack of the medical source statement will not make the report incomplete. See § 416.927.

(c) *Statements about what you can still do.* Statements about what you can still do (based on the medical source's findings on the factors under paragraphs (b)(1) through (b)(5) of this section) should describe, but are not limited to, the kinds of physical and mental capabilities listed below. See §§ 416.927 and 416.945(c).

(1) The medical source's opinion about your ability, despite your impairment(s), to do work-related activities such as sitting, standing, walking, lifting, carrying, handling objects, hearing, speaking, and traveling; and

(2) In cases of mental impairment(s), the medical source's opinion about your ability to understand, to carry out and remember instructions, and to respond appropriately to supervision, coworkers, and work pressures in a work setting.

(3) If you are a child, the medical source's opinion about your physical or mental abilities to function independently, appropriately, and effectively in an age-appropriate manner, as described in § 416.924d.

(d) *Completeness.* The medical evidence, including the clinical and laboratory findings, must be complete and detailed enough to allow us to make a determination about whether you are disabled or blind. It must allow us to determine—

(1) The nature and limiting effects of your impairment(s) for any period in question;

(2) The probable duration of your impairment; and

(3) Your residual functional capacity to do work-related physical and mental activities.

(e) *Information from other sources.* Information from other sources may also help us to understand how your impairment(s) affects your ability to work or, if you are a child, your ability to function independently, appropriately, and effectively in an age-appropriate

manner. Other sources may include, and are not limited to—

(1) Public and private social welfare agencies and social workers;

(2) Observations by people who know you (for example, spouses, parents and other caregivers, siblings, other relatives, friends or neighbors, clergy);

(3) Other practitioners (for example, nurse practitioners and physicians' assistants, naturopaths, and chiropractors);

(4) Therapists (for example, physical, occupational, or speech and language therapists); and

(5) Educational agencies and personnel (for example, school teachers, school psychologists who are not acceptable medical sources under paragraph (a), school counselors, preschools, early intervention teams, developmental centers, and daycare centers).

(f) *Evidence we need to establish statutory blindness.* If you are applying for benefits on the basis of statutory blindness, we will require an examination by a physician skilled in diseases of the eye or by an optometrist, whichever you may select.

[45 FR 55621, Aug. 20, 1980, as amended at 56 FR 5553, Feb. 11, 1991; 56 FR 36964, Aug. 1, 1991; 58 FR 47577, Sept. 9, 1993]

§ 416.914 When we will purchase existing evidence.

We need specific medical evidence to determine whether you are disabled or blind. We will pay for the medical evidence we request, if there is a charge. We will also be responsible for the cost of medical evidence we ask you to get.

§ 416.915 Where and how to submit evidence.

You may give us evidence about your impairment at any of our offices or at the office of any State agency authorized to make disability or blindness determinations. You may also give evidence to one of our employees authorized to accept evidence at another place. For more information about this, see subpart C of this part.

§ 416.916 If you fail to submit medical and other evidence.

You (and if you are a child, your parent, guardian, relative, or other person